

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 624  
By McKee

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Neal and Maggie Ensminger upon their many contributions to the United Methodist Church, Holston Conference, Tennessee Wesleyan College and the City of Athens.

WHEREAS, Neal and Maggie Ensminger are one of the most respected and beloved couples associated with United Methodism in the Holston Conference; and

WHEREAS, their robust faith and their unbridled love have resulted in their faithful service to the United Methodist Church, the Holston Conference, Tennessee Wesleyan College and the City of Athens, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, for 55 years, Neal Ensminger has thoughtfully and expertly taught the Home Service Sunday School Class at Keith Memorial United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, for fifty of those years, the class has been broadcast on local radio as "The Sunday School of the Air", introducing many citizens to the love and spirit of Christianity who would not have otherwise attended church; and

WHEREAS, on Sunday, May 19, 1996, Mr. Ensminger will retire as a Sunday School teacher after 55 years of inspirational service to God and his fellow human beings; and

WHEREAS, the members of Keith Memorial United Methodist Church are commemorating this special occasion by launching a drive to endow a scholarship in Mr. and Mrs. Ensminger's honor at Tennessee Wesleyan College; and

WHEREAS, J. Neal Ensminger is a renowned figure in Holston Conference Methodism, having served as an interim preacher, a lay leader and speaker, a member of three General Conferences and five Jurisdictional Conferences; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ensminger is a graduate of Tennessee Wesleyan College and was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Journalism by T.W.C.; he was the first recipient of the T.W.C. Distinguished Alumnus Award, in addition to receiving the Harry Steadman Distinguished Service Award; and

WHEREAS, he was co-founder of Wesleyan's first Greek fraternity, which became the Tennessee chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon, and was the featured speaker at the Holston Conference session that elevated Tennessee Wesleyan College from a Junior College to a four-year, degree-granting institution; and

WHEREAS, in the merger of the United Brethren and the Methodist Churches, he was called on to be the featured speaker, and he was honored as the first Lay Leader Emeritus in the Cleveland District of the Methodist Church-Holston Conference; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ensminger holds unlimited "Firsts" in addition to those aforementioned; he was the first recipient of the Athens "Friend of Education" award; the first "Athens Man of the Year"; and first "Editor Emeritus" of the Daily Post-Athenian, where he was employed for 50 years, as Editor and General Manager during some of those years; and

WHEREAS, Neal Ensminger was a member of the county's first 4-H Club, and was co-founder of the Friendly Fellow Club, known for its Christmas Food baskets to the needy; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Ensminger has truly accomplished a great deal, but one of his greatest achievements was to persuade Maggie Ensminger, nee Maggie Beaver, to join him in marriage; and

WHEREAS, Maggie's connection with Tennessee Wesleyan College includes over twenty years' service in the Library, where she befriended hundreds of Wesleyan students as a Librarian, as well as a Mother-Away-From-Home; and

WHEREAS, as Neal's partner and motivator, Maggie Ensminger has astutely served her church and community with dedication; she was Co-director for 25 years in the nursery at Keith Church and has also served as a Sunday School Teacher and on various committees; and

WHEREAS, Maggie Ensminger was the recipient of the T.W.C. Mildred Sullivan Award; she has also been named Athens Mother of the Year and Cleveland District Woman of the Year; and

WHEREAS, with the above-listed credentials for a life of service to God's work, the community and Tennessee Wesleyan College comes the endeavor to establish an endowed scholarship in the name of "Neal and Maggie Ensminger" at Tennessee Wesleyan; and

WHEREAS, the scholarship will be a living memorial to this inspirational couple who have influenced the lives of so many people throughout the Holston Conference and in their community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby commend and honor Neal and Maggie Ensminger upon their many contributions to the United Methodist Church, Holston Conference, Tennessee Wesleyan College and the City of Athens, and salute their many sterling endeavors in service of God and their fellow human beings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.